

DEPARTMENT OF CALIFORNIA HIGHWAY PATROL

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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CHP LAUNCHES WEEK-LONG LAW ENFORCEMENT FOCUS ON CHILD SAFETY SEAT COMPLIANCE

SACRAMENTO – The California Highway Patrol (CHP) is joining law enforcement agencies May 22 - 29, in a nationwide maximum enforcement effort focused on drivers who do not buckle up children. CHP is also launching the use of an 800 number to enlist the help of motorists who observe child passengers who are not properly restrained.

“It is every driver’s responsibility to properly secure child passengers in a safety belt or car safety seat. The number of children killed and injured in collisions because they were not properly secured is more than tragic, it’s unacceptable,” says CHP Commissioner D. O. “Spike” Helmick. “This week-long enforcement effort is our way of telling motorists we have zero tolerance for anyone who does not properly secure child passengers.

According to the CHP’s provisional report of fatal victims under age four, 38 children were killed and 2,863 were injured statewide in collisions in 1999. Of the 38 killed, 11 were not secured in a safety seat; 15 were improperly secured in their seats; and only 7 were in safety seats that were used correctly.

The CHP is putting special efforts into getting the message to Latino motorists, as 22 of the 38 children killed were Latino or had Latin surnames. “Our Community Outreach office and our El Protector officers are working diligently to get the ‘buckle-up’ message to Latino motorists throughout the state. We simply must do all we can to keep children safe when traveling in a car.”

MORE

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safety seat enforcement

In a move to gain greater compliance, the CHP is enlisting the help all California motorists with a spotter program where citizens are encouraged to call **1-800 TELL CHP** and report motorists traveling with unrestrained children. Registered vehicle owners who are reported receive a letter reminding them that the law requires them to properly secure child passengers. Additionally, those registered owners receive information on how to properly install a child safety seat and how they can get assistance with child passenger safety.

“California is the nationwide leader in safety belt compliance. It’s time we step-up-to-the-plate and do the same for our children. There is absolutely no excuse for not properly securing a child passenger,” says Helmick.”

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